

SITUATION REPORT NO. 17
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: APRIL 10, 1997 TIME: 1:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: A Barnes County man died of a heart attack after he waited six hours for an ambulance, which was delayed by snow-clogged roads. To date, six people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.
3. DAMAGES: Nearly 10,500 rural electric customers were still without power as of April 9. More than 30,000 customers had been without power as a result of the April 5-6 blizzard. Power may not be restored to more remote areas of the state for up to seven days because of widespread damage. Ten rural electric cooperatives had nearly 4,300 poles damaged in the storm, according to the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. Two rural electric generator and transmission cooperatives also reported damages to equipment. The storm damaged 99 steel towers (345Kv) and 450 double-pole structures damaged owned by Minnkota Power and 85 transmission poles owned by Central Power in Minot. Repair efforts had been hindered by muddy fields, flooding and heavy snow, which had limited access to damage sites. However, recent freezing temperatures are making it easier for crews to maneuver.

The National Weather Service on April 10 revised its forecast for the Red River of the North at Fargo. The river is now predicted to rise to 37.5 feet to 38 feet. An automated gauge had malfunctioned, prompting the Weather Service to forecast the crest at up to 39.5 feet. The river is expected to crest by late April 10 or early April 11. Upstream, Wahpeton is bracing for its second crest of the Red River, which is expected to occur during the April 11-12 weekend. The Weather Service expects the Red River to swell because of heavy inflows from Rabbit River in Minnesota and possible overland flows from the Wild Rice River. The Red River at Wahpeton may crest at 17.5 to 18.5 feet, below the April 6 all-time high crest of 19.2 feet. Throughout the Red River Valley, cooler temperatures have increased the potential for ice jam formation. Four families have been evacuated from the south Wahpeton area. Flooding in the West Fargo area also forced the evacuation of two people.

The status of North Dakota rivers and tributaries above flood stage are as follows:

Station	Flood 4/10/97 Stage	24-hr Stage Difference	Flood of Record
<u><i>Red River</i></u>			
Wahpeton	10 ft.	16.08	+0.10 ft. 19.2 ft.
Fargo	17 ft.	36.79 ft.	+1.44 ft. 37.5 ft.
Halstad, MN	24 ft.	34.61 ft.	+1.30 ft. 39 ft.
East Grand Forks	28 ft.	41.49 ft.	+0.64 ft. 48.8 ft.
<u><i>Wild Rice</i></u>			
Abercrombie	10 ft.	(Not available)	24.6 ft.
<u><i>Maple River</i></u>			
Enderlin	6 ft.	8.41 ft.	-0.08 ft. 15.4 ft.
Mapleton	9 ft.	(Not available)	15 ft.
<u><i>Sheyenne River</i></u>			
Cooperstown	12 ft.	18.21 ft.	+1.0 ft. 18.69 ft.
Lisbon	11 ft.	15.40 ft.	-0.03 ft. 19 ft.
Kindred	16 ft.	21.72 ft.	No change 21.7 ft.
<u><i>Forest River</i></u>			
Minto	6 ft.	(Not available)	11.8 ft.
Fordville	8 ft.	(Not available)	14.5 ft.
<u><i>Souris River</i></u>			
Foxholm	10 ft.	13.32 ft.	-0.24 ft. 17.71 ft.

In Stutsman County, waters are spilling out of Spiritwood Lake, which has risen above its 1,446.30-foot overflow elevation. During the past weekend, water estimated to be three to four feet in depth passed through a 10-foot wide cut on the southeast corner of the lake. Freezing temperatures this week have slowed the flow of water, the N.D. State Water Commission reported.

Precipitation that fell over the Devils Lake Basin during the April 5-6 storm contained approximately three inches of water. Devils Lake had risen to 1,438.32 feet MSL on April 10 as a result of weekend precipitation, snow melt and inflows into the lake basin. Officials are evaluating projections that the lake will rise to 1,440.5 feet MSL, one-half foot lower than its 1830 record level.

The N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) anticipates closing I-29 in the Harwood area as early as April 10. Traffic will be rerouted to alternate state routes east of U.S. Highway 281. A load limit of 80,000 pounds will be in effect until May 7.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Vice President Al Gore and North Dakota's Congressional Delegation will tour North Dakota's storm-damaged and flood-stricken areas on April 11. The itinerary has not yet been released. James Lee Witt, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is scheduled April 10 to view flood preparedness and response efforts in Grand Forks, Grafton and Fargo.

In response to North Dakota's widespread outages, utility crews from South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska and Wisconsin are assisting with efforts to restore power to communities and farmsteads. FEMA is bringing 50 generators to North Dakota and personnel who are technical experts in emergency power distribution. The generators range in size from 12 kilowatts to 455 kilowatts. In addition, the N.D. National Guard is also providing 18 generators to communities.

Col. James Henderson, Defense Coordinating Officer for the Fifth Army and Forces Command, and his five-member team arrived on April 9 at the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). They will facilitate requests by the state and FEMA for U.S. Department of Defense assets.

The National Guard used a helicopter to evacuate two people living northwest of West Fargo after water encircled their home. The National Guard also evacuated four families located south of Wahpeton by ground transport.

The Air National Guard has two civil engineering teams on alert to support the flood operations in North Dakota. North Dakota's National Guard forces have completed 37 missions and have 28 underway. National Guard members participating in the mission include 112 Army Guard and 31 Air Guard.

The U.S. Coast Guard has stationed three rescue and evacuation teams in North Dakota. A search and rescue helicopter has been assigned to the Air National Guard facility. A rescue boat unit, consisting of three 16-foot boats, has been assigned to the Fargo area, and another such unit will operate in the Wahpeton area.

An air crew for the North Dakota Civil Air Patrol delivered communications equipment on April 9 to U.S. Coast Guard in Fargo and Grand Forks. The equipment will allow point-to-point communications between the Coast Guard and the State EOC.

The N.D. Highway Patrol, the N.D. DOT and the N.D. National Guard are coordinating plans for rerouting traffic around flooded highways. The Highway Patrol is assisting in routing truck drivers around the Fargo area. The Highway Patrol and the N.D. DOT are determining placement of barricades, which will be staffed by National Guard members.

FEMA has instituted its toll-free registration number for North Dakota storm and flood victims. The system allows victims to register immediately for state, federal and voluntary disaster assistance programs. The number, staffed from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., seven days

a week, is (800) 462-9029. The telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDD) number is (800) 462-7585.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director